



Lincoln County Economic Development Council
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March 7, 2014

TO: Federal Communication Commission
FROM: Margie Hall, Director, Lincoln County Economic Development Council
SUBJECT: Comments on Docket No. 10-90

Dear FCC Commissioners:

The Lincoln County Local Technology Planning Team (LCLTPT) in rural Washington State would like to express our support for the FCC CAF IP Technology Transition Docket 10-90 voluntary experiments. As the [Lincoln County EDC](#) Director, I am commenting on behalf of rural Lincoln County's Local Technology Planning Team (LTPT,) a team of stakeholders formed to address challenges identified while developing our Economic Development Strategy. Those challenges include youth outmigration and a lack of post K-12 educational opportunities and increasing broadband access and use are important to addressing them, as well as being important to strengthening overall economic development.

Lincoln County is 2,311 square miles, the seventh largest county in Washington State. We are predominately agricultural and, with a population of 10,570, average less than five people per square mile. In comparison, Washington State as a whole has 101 people per square mile. Half of the population lives outside of the eight municipalities, either on farms and ranches or in unincorporated communities. This makes availability of broadband a challenge.

In 2012, Lincoln County was listed in the *Broadband in Washington 2012 Annual Report* as the eighth most un-served county in the state. That same year, the county received \$5 million in ARRA-funded high speed broadband fiber, installed by a middle-mile provider. Because of our low level of service and this fiber installation, Lincoln County applied for and was awarded a broadband planning grant from the Washington State Broadband Office (WSBO.) With the support of the broadband office and its funding, we have formed the LTPT and are currently inventorying our telecom infrastructure and services and assessing the broadband needs of our businesses, schools and anchor institutions. In surveying the anchor institutions that were connected to the ARRA fiber when it was installed, we are learning that most are not using it because they can't find a service provider willing to invest in an area with such low population.

While we are not at a point in our planning where we can submit an Expression of Interest letter, the State broadband office introduced the FCC's Connect America Phase II Experiments to the team and we support this new order to help address broadband challenges such as those we face. We have middle mile fiber that we cannot fully use because we lack last mile options.

We applaud your willingness to look at new ways to get the job done.

Sincerely,

Margie Hall, Executive Director
Lincoln County Economic Development Council
Washington State

Local Technology Planning Team

Lincoln County Commissioners Mark Stedman (Chair,) Scott Hutsell and Rob Coffman; Brad Hudson, Lincoln Co. Information Systems; Will Saunders and Frieda Ray, WA State Broadband Office; Monica Babine, WSU Extension Digital Initiatives; Margie Hall and Joyce Mings, Lincoln County EDC; Jamie Manchester, Librarian, Sprague-Lamont School District; Lincoln Co. PUD Commissioners Jerry Sheffels, Stephen Krupke and Loren Rux; Robert Wyborne, Mayor of the Town of Wilbur; MaryJo Krause, Davenport Library Board; Steve Aubuchon, Avista Utilities; Chris Cable, Inland Power; Tom Villani, Northwest Open Access Network